



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Contact: Susan Buchanan
(301) 713-2370

NOAA05-132
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 26, 2005

INITIAL WHITE SHRIMP SAMPLES FROM MISSISSIPPI SOUND SHOW NO ELEVATED CONTAMINANTS

Tests of white shrimp samples collected the week of September 12 from Mississippi Sound found no elevated contaminants, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced today. The agency collected 23 samples of white shrimp from Mobile Bay to Lake Borgne two weeks after Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf coast. The samples were tested for hydrocarbon exposure due to oil spills or urban runoffs, and other contaminants, such as PCBs and DDTs.

Analyses found PCB levels below five parts per billion (ppb) and DDT levels below two ppb, which were within U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines for consumption. FDA guidelines allow PCB levels of 2,000 ppb and DDT levels of 5,000 ppb.

Analyses also found low levels of hydrocarbons in the shrimp, less than 15 ppb. In addition, analyses showed no detectable level of brominated flame retardants (PBDEs) in the shrimp samples.

NOAA tested samples of shrimp that were caught prior to hurricane Katrina and found similarly low levels of toxins.

The agency previously announced that analyses of water, sediment, crab samples, and fish tissue also collected during the week of September 12 found no elevated contaminants or bacteria.

NOAA scientists currently are analyzing the second round of samples collected from the Gulf of Mexico during the week of September 26. Agency scientists returned to port on October 17 after collecting the third round of samples aboard a chartered shrimp trawler, the Patricia Jean. Scientists collected samples from areas that most likely would be affected by delayed releases of toxic substances, such as the mouth of the Mississippi River and the western Mississippi Sound where water from Lake Pontchartrain enters the Gulf of Mexico.

NOAA will continue to collect and test samples at least through the end of the year to monitor for any environmental change over time.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

- more -

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

###

On the Web:

NOAA's Katrina Environmental Impacts Research: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/hurricane_katrina

NOAA: www.noaa.gov

NOAA Fisheries Service: www.nmfs.noaa.gov